AGES
Advocacy Group for the Environmentally Sensitive

Ottawa Chapter
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Burlington
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Keith Spicer,
Editor,
The Citizen.

26 August 1986

Dear Mr. Spicer,

The Thomson Report on environmental hypersensitivity reports that the public has been done a disservice by media reports on this condition that have emphasized differences of opinion in the medical profession, while not reporting the consensus for dealing with the issue.

As a former reporter I understand the temptation to employ the cheap drama of disagreement that can be found on almost any issue. As a former reporter I also understand the value of the media in dispelling myths, and in bringing the public to a new understanding of an issue.

Your newspaper has bred doubt by publishing only the confusion surrounding the condition environmental hypersensitivity. In the meantime, a provincial commission and an independent review body have deemed that thousands of people in Ontario are suffering a wide variety of sometimes disabling effects from various substances in the environment.

You should be aware that these problems are not usually allergy, and that the term 'total allergy syndrome', for most people with environmental hypersensitivity, is misleading.

I would hope you would repair some of the damage your newspaper has done to people with this condition. If you insist you are merely reporting the 'facts', as you have stated while defending your damaging reports in the past, I can only suggest you have a very perverse sense of journalistic responsibility, and I would suggest you discuss the matter with any of the some one thousand victims in the Ottawa area who, frankly, have been embarassed by your coverage so far.

Thank you,

Chris Brown
(613) 237 0928
P.S. If I haven't overly threatened you by maintaining a different view than you seem to have, please consider the attached brief.